

CABINET



MONDAY, 21 JULY 2025 - 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor S Count, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor C Seaton and Councillor S Tierney

APOLOGIES: Councillor G Christy, Councillor Mrs D Laws and Councillor S Wallwork

CAB7/25 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 16 June 2025 were approved and signed.

CAB8/25 FENLAND INSPIRE! CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Members considered the Fenland Inspire! Civil Parking Enforcement Update report presented by Councillor Mrs French.

- Councillor Tierney voiced his frustration that this is the second most common issue after street drinking and that the public believes the Council are at fault. He said this is not true, it is a case of signs and lines not being up to scratch which is the responsibility of the County Council who are not doing what they should. Fenland District Council is doing all it can to push through civil parking enforcement and if County had done their work, it would have happened already. The public are being told things which are not true which is all very unhelpful. Meanwhile he would hope that FDC will be able to use some of the Fenland Inspire! project money to upgrade the signs and lines although it should not have to.
- Councillor Mrs French said she and the Leader have a meeting next week with officers to discuss costings. She is concerned about how much it may cost to employ Milestones when £100,000 of Council money has already been spent on consultation.
- Councillor Boden agreed with Councillor Tierney, saying that County Council have refused to bring lines up to standard and have made unreasonable requirements between FDC and the Highways Authority. He was surprised to learn that there is no legal way to oblige the County Council to upgrade the signs and lines and they have not moved on this. However, it is now all academic as when civil parking enforcement is likely to come into force, both authorities will be abolished and become part of the same new authority anyway. There is no reason for this council not to push forward but it is something many residents are fed up with and they want action taken.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs French, seconded by Councillor Seaton and AGREED to:

- **Note the updated estimated increase in the overall project delivery costs, timelines and CPE running costs post implementation.**
- **Consent to officers proceeding with obtaining updated corrective works costs from Milestone which is likely in itself to incur a cost (currently unknown but estimated to be within the range of £50k to £100k).**
- **Consent to officers proceeding with the implementation of CPE based on the predicted costs contained within this update report in advance of obtaining actual costs. Estimated costs to be brought back to Cabinet for approval upon receipt.**
- **Provide an officer steer on any previously highlighted red line areas within the previously drafted preliminary agency agreement.**

- Approve the member/officer CPE project team to agree any red line areas in order to progress the CPE project to implementation. This would include the administration of all highway permits, suspensions, waivers and dispensations.

CAB9/25 FENLAND INSPIRE! PROJECT: PLAY EQUIPMENT

Members considered the Fenland Inspire! Project: Play Equipment report presented by Councillor Seaton.

- Councillor Hoy pointed out an error at 3.5 of the report that should read Westmead Avenue, not Westmead Road. She added that this is a very welcome addition as current provision is quite poor.
- Councillor Mrs French said the current provision is a disgrace and welcomes this report.

Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Notes the report and the current comprehensive offer to the community in terms of play areas, skate parks, a splash pad and MUGA's across the District.
- 1.2 Notes the General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, agreed by Cabinet and Council in February which projects a financial shortfall for 2025/26 of £1.432m increasing year on year amounting to around £3.4m by 2027/28.
- 1.3 Instructs officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to assess requirements for new play areas on FDC land close to residential areas, or in the event that there are limited options available, to suggest enhancements to existing play areas with a rationale for the play areas selected. Any final decision on these new or enhanced play areas is to be made in the future by Cabinet.
- 1.4 Approves the development of a new play area to replace the existing poor quality play area at Westmead Avenue in Wisbech, to an adjoining position in the same open space, with a maximum budget of £60,000 from the Fenland Inspire! capital project.
- 1.5 Instructs officers to develop a database of current play equipment with an assessment of the useful life left in each piece of equipment, and that any equipment with a life of less than three years is replaced as part of this project, with the capital funding coming from the Fenland Inspire! capital fund.
- 1.6 Notes that the refurbishment of the Manor Leisure Centre will mean the necessary movement of the skate park at Manor Field in Whittlesey, and that Cabinet notes that this work will form part of this play area project in conjunction with other proposed works. The budget will be from the Fenland Inspire! programme but will form part of the overall Manor Leisure refurbishment project costs.
- 1.7 Authorises the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! and the Leader of the Council, in his role as Portfolio Holder for Finance, to execute and complete all requisite legal and governance documentation in relation to Cabinet decisions made regarding the matters outlined above, and that Cabinet authorises the Section 151 Officer to make all necessary financial arrangements within the Fenland Inspire! capital budget to carry forward decisions made by Cabinet as a result of this report.

CAB10/25 FENLAND INSPIRE! PROJECT REGARDING NORTH DRIVE RECREATION GROUND - OPTIONS FOR NEW PLAY EQUIPMENT

Members considered the Fenland Inspire! Project regarding North Drive Recreation Ground report presented by Councillor Seaton.

- Councillor Mrs French welcomed the report as North Drive is the most deprived area of March in terms of so few facilities, and it is time that the children had something there.

- Councillor Tierney stated that it is important to get the consultation right; often young people will either be unaware of a consultation or not respond. It is important for them to have a voice as what they want and will use may be different to what older people decide. They must therefore be given a good chance to engage.
- Councillor Boden agreed and asked that officers take that on board; he requested that they be open and pay attention to what young people ask for and not just give them a choice between a or b.
- Councillor Seaton said these are good points and that he has instructed officers to ensure the younger element are taken note of during consultation and given every opportunity to contribute.

Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED that Cabinet:

- **Instructs officers to proceed with a community consultation regarding the option of either a skate park or a BMX Pump track in the location described above on the open space at North Drive Recreation Ground in March.**
- **Notes the original space discussed by Cabinet in November 2024 to be designated as space required for biodiversity net gain following the development of either a skate park or BMX pumping track.**

CAB11/25 ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

Members considered the Annual Report 2024/25 presented by Councillor Boden.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Tierney and AGREED to approve the Annual Report of the Council 2024/25.

CAB12/25 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2024/25

Members considered the Revenue and Capital Outturn 2024/25 report presented by Councillor Boden.

- Councillor Boden thanked Sian Warren for the work she has done with Peter Catchpole and Mark Saunders, who has now retired and will be greatly missed.
- Councillor Mrs French expressed her thanks to the officers involved for a job well done.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED that:

- (i) **The Outturn for the Council's General Fund services in 2024/25, as detailed at Appendix A and Section 2 of this report be noted and that Members note the transfer of the surplus to the Budget Equalisation Reserve'**
- (ii) **The reasons for the variations from revised estimate be noted;**
- (iii) **The current position on the Cambridgeshire Horizons Reserve, as detailed in Section 3 of this report be noted;**
- (iv) **The proposed Capital Funding schedule for 2024/25 at Appendix B(i) be approved.**

CAB13/25 POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR SUPPORTING RESIDENTS EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC ABUSE

Members considered the Policy and Procedures for Supporting Residents Experiencing Domestic Abuse report presented by Councillor Hoy.

Councillor Boden said he was pleased to see this report at Cabinet having already been presented to the Employment Committee. It is a very good report and unfortunately domestic abuse affects too many people.

Proposed by Councillor Hoy, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to approve the Policy and Procedure set out in Appendix B for supporting residents experiencing domestic abuse.

CAB14/25 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Noted for information.

CAB15/25 PORT OPERATIONS REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)

Prior to consideration of this item, Councillor Tierney said he wanted to make a general point about confidentiality, having often heard it suggested that there was something corrupt or untoward regarding agenda items going into private session. He believes that the public do not always realise that often there are legal reasons why this must sometimes happen, i.e. for discussions over money matters that affect outside businesses or the contractual way that councils work. However legal advice is always taken before making this decision and doing so is always avoided where possible, but all councils do it as part of a normal process.

Councillor Boden agreed that it is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1972 that certain matters are to be discussed as exempt items, and it would potentially be harmful to the Council and third parties to discuss such matters in public.

Members proceeded to consider the Port Operations report presented by Councillor Boden.

Members made comments, asked questions and received responses.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to all recommendations in the confidential report, with one additional recommendation.

(Members resolved to exclude the public for this item of business on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

3.24 pm

Chairman